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ABSTRACT

This competency-based preservice home economics teacher education module on consumer aspects of parenthood is the fifth in a set of five modules on consumer education related to human development. (This set is part of a larger series of sixty-seven modules on the Management Approach to Teaching Consumer and Homemaking Education [MATCHE]--see CE 019 901-967.) Following the module objective and overview, three units of instruction are presented: (1) personal and financial pressures surrounding living units with children (lessons included are on background and research and creating a learning activity); (2) securing child care services (includes lessons on gathering information on securing child care, and writing a concise article); and (3) consumer education for children (includes lessons on collecting data on advertising aimed at children and creating an advertisement). Each lesson generally includes a narrative summary and suggested activities. A list of suggested module resources (readings) and a list of module post-evaluation discussion questions conclude the document. (Workshop proceedings relating to the development of these modules are available in the ERIC system as CE 019 896-899; also available is a module on utilizing FHA-HERO as an instructional strategy to expand and strenghten the home economics instructional programs [CE 019 900].) (JH)

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CONSUMER APPROACH STRAND:

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

MODULE I-E-5 CONSUMER ASPECTS OF PARENTHOOD

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1978

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MATCHE

Management Approach to Teaching Consumer and Homemaking Education

MATCHE is an individualized, competency-based preservice curriculum designed for home economics education students at the preprofessional, upper division level. MATCHE is a comprehensive curriculum based on selected objectives which give emphases in three areas: 1) consumer approach to homemaking education, 2) teaching home economics in economically depressed areas, and 3) establishing occupational programs related to home economics. The material for each subject matter area of home economics has been organized into these three strands, and includes an FHA-HERO emphasis. These subject matter areas are home economics education core, housing, foods and nutrition, textiles and clothing, human development, and management.

The MATCHE modules were written by subject matter specialists from various colleges and universities offering home economics and therefore each is unique in the approach used for the development of the objectives. The modules allow for differences in level of achievement, rate of learning, and learning goals. They may be used independently, combined into a sequential series, or as a random set of conceptual units. Any instructor using the material can easily adapt the material to a specific group of students, the locale, method of instruction, and available facilities. Learning may be facilitated by offering one module in conjunction with others.

As MATCHE is continuously up-dated by those using the curriculum, some concepts and objectives may be added and others deleted. The purpose is to continually strengthen the program for pre and inservice home economics teachers.

Guidelines for Use and Continuous Development of MATCHE are on file with Home Economics units in each of the fifty state departments of education plus all of the Home Economics Departments in California institutions offering home economics education. This booklet and proceedings from the four MATCHE workshops give background information concerning the purpose and development of the MATCHE project.

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MATCHE PROJECT

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CONSUMER ASPECTS OF PARENTHOOD

Module Objective

Based upon current research, analysis, observation and imagination, the MATCHE student will be able to identify and articulate the key issues relating to the consumer aspects of children and parenthood.

Module Overview

This is an activity-centered module which is designed to increase your sensitivity to the consumer aspects of children and child rearing. All to often persons decide to have a child without giving comprehensive attention to the financial shifts and strains which will come to their life style. Because the actual costs are not in any way clearly determinable, persons have tried to calculate the actual costs for the reason of shocking prospective parents into thinking about what child rearing can mean--financially. This, while often being a useful tool, has also served as a smoke screen for the real issues which will test a relationship such as: 1) shifts in values, 2) shifts in life styles, 3) personal growth catalyzed by the experience of children, and 4) unseen costs which could be major barriers to the basic survival of a marriage.

In this module you will be working in small groups of five to become more broadly aware of the consumer issues surrounding a living unit which involves children. This module has been divided into the following units:

Unit 1: Personal and Financial Pressures Surrounding Living Units With Children

Unit 2: Securing Child Care Services

Unit 3: Consumer Education for Children

UNIT 1

PERSONAL AND FINANCIAL PRESSURES SURROUNDING LIVING UNITS WITH CHILDREN

Objective

The MATCHE student will be able to create a learning activity which will make students aware of the current issues and financial pressures surrounding living units with children.

Overview

This unit is designed to increase your awareness of the general issues involved in child rearing and how they can affect the financial status of the living unit. Families from different socioeconomic backgrounds incur different problems which, in turn, create varying obstacles and advantages to each group. As each family develops priorities and values changes, persons change, and society changes, making any firm information and research completed today far less than accurate or definitively useless for tomorrow.

In this unit, you will create a learning activity which will sensitize you to the current issues involved in the consumer aspects of child rearing. It is the intention that when you will be teaching in secondary schools in the future that learning activities of this kind will be a significant and useful tool for your teaching task.

Lesson 1: Background and Research

Narrative Summary

There is not a wealth of concise literature which will help you create learning activities which would sensitize you to the consumer issues of child rearing. There is, around you, however, a wealth of information which you can synthesize and use to create a truly contemporary learning activity. Your own past is an excellent resource. Where did major amounts of money get spent when you were a child? What kinds of pressures did you put on your family? Are these still relevant for contemporary child rearing? How did you presonally spend money when you were young?

Talking with other persons can also give you some perspective. In these interviews, you should attempt to cover the following questions:

1. What kinds of plans were made to evaluate the consumer issues to be faced as parents?

2. What issues were not covered before the entrance of the child into the living unit?

3. Were the plans adequate? Would the plans have been adequate if there had been a shift in income?

4. Would the plans have been adequate for a very low-income family?

5. Ask interviewees to guess what the child has cost to date.

6. What unexpected consumer pressures have the interviewees faced to date?

After your interviews, you will look up two articles in recent publications which are relevant to the most interesting aspects of child rearing consumer issues discovered in your interviews. You will also review any information you acquired in your lower division work in this area. Finally, you will make a short content outline of all the work you have done in this lesson and have it ready for class discussion.

Suggested Activities

1. Review your past, using the questions in the narrative summary.

2. Interview at least two living units which include children and acquire information based on the questions in the narrative summary.

3. Read two articles from contemporary publications concerning a selected issue of parental consumer concern which interest you.

4. Make a short content outline of all of this work which you can use for class discussion.

(Note to students: You should have a group of at least five persons or you will need to modify this plan to fit your group size.)

Check with your instructor before proceeding to Lesson 2.

Lesson 2: Creating a Learning Activity

Narrative Summary

This lesson will be highly dependent on the level of imagination you can raise in your small group. You now have a broad review of many

different aspects of the issue you have studied in relation to parent-consumer concerns. Each member of your group will have a different content outline with different information from different living units. You will have various problems represented, various backgrounds, financial pressures, and solutions. If you have done your work carefully, all of this information should now be easily accessible to your whole group as you plan a learning activity.

You will create a game to be played by four persons. This game will be organized around the information you have gained in the first lesson. To this information your small group will add, from its collective imagination, other conceivable factors which might affect the consumer aspects of child rearing. At this point you should purchase or acquire a "Game of Life" from a local novelty or game store. You can pattern your game after "The Game of Life," substituting the factors you have chosen--imaginatively modifying the game to make it more relevant to the issues in this unit. After you have created your game, try it so that any simple problems in the game may be avoided.

Select four persons to play the game (who come from living units with no children) and two other persons (who have children living with them) to augment your group observation of the game. You will observe the game being played and evaluate the entire learning experience with the entire group (your small group, your instructor, the four players and the two observers).

Suggested Activities

1. Acquire or purchase the game called "The Game of Life" and as a group study it. Imaginatively adapt the game to use relevant issues discovered in this unit. (You will probably need to create a new board and playing items.)

2. Select a group of four persons who do not have children within their living unit to be players and two observers who do have children in their living units. Play the game, and observers observe, making notes on developments, inadequacies, insights, etc.

3. Evaluate the game and discuss with your small group, your instructor, four players, and two observers the following:
   a. What were the relevant insights by the players?
   b. What problems or issues were not covered?
   c. How could the game be modified to be more realistic?
   d. What kinds of financial plans can be made so children can enter more smoothly into a living unit? What factors cannot be planned for?

4. Submit a brief analysis of what he or she would approximately spend on raising a child, listing categories. Compare your list with those of the other members of your small group.

Progress Check

Your instructor will give your group a short critique of the completeness and usefulness of your game. Each person should explain to the instructor where he or she contributed most heavily to the development of the learning activity which was planned jointly.

UNIT 2

SECURING CHILD CARE SERVICES

Objectives

After personal interviews with ten working parents, the MATCHE student will be able to engage in a small group discussion with peers to consider problems the parents have in securing child care services, suggest alternative solutions to the problems, and recommend possible action that might be taken by the community to alleviate the problems.

The MATCHE student will be able to write an article suitable for publication in a daily or weekly newspaper, magazine, or consumer bulletin on the factors to consider in selecting child care services including philosophy, policies, cost, quality of services, developmental program, sanitation, and safety.

Overview

This unit will give you the opportunity to personally interview several working parents to determine the problems encountered in securing child care services. After discussing this with your peers, you will be able to suggest solutions to these problems. You will also be instructed in writing a publishable article concerned with the many facets of selecting child care services. You will also attempt to determine what factors seem to be the most important to the parents looking for child care.

Lesson 1: Gathering Information on Securing Child Care

Narrative Summary

In this unit you will again be working in a small group of five. You will be gathering personal evidence on the specific problems which working parents face in securing child care facilities for their children. Your group will conduct ten interviews with working parents (each member of your group taking an appropriate number) who have already found child care for their children. The purpose is to collect information from ten parents on 1) the priorities used for securing adequate facilities for their child or children and 2) the problems faced in securing the desired care. A good place to find parents in these categories is at a day care facility itself, asking for a few minutes before or after they are there to leave or pick up their children.

Suggested Activities

1. Determine, in your small group, a pattern of questions for use, to most efficiently gather information from the working parents. Consult the two pamphlets listed in the list of resources. Check with your instructor.

2. Listen to the tape "How to Conduct an Interview," and discuss techniques with the instructor.

3. Interview a total of ten working parents to determine priorities and problems described in the narrative summary.

4. Meet as a group and determine the general priorities used for securing child care services by the parents interviewed and the problems these parents faced in securing the style of facilities they wanted. Suggest possible solutions.

Discuss the findings with your instructor before proceeding to Lesson 2.

Lesson 2: Writing a Concise Article

Narrative Summary

In this lesson you will use the information gathered in Lesson 1 to write an article suitable and in the form for publication about the priorities stated and problems faced by working parents in securing day care for their children. To get the comprehensiveness and quality expected, you will work as a group on the same article--passing it from person to person--and finally your instructor will evaluate your work and add suggestions. You will do a final writing and submit it to the National Association Education Young Children and a local newspaper for publiction.

Suggested Activities

1. Write a progressive article with the other members of your group covering the priorities expressed and the problems faced by working parents securing child care facilities for their children. One person should make a content outline of the general information gathered. The second should make a rough draft of the article, adding what he or she thinks would make the article more complete. Others should read and correct the article, adding or indicating what they would eliminate. The last person will type the article and submit it to the instructor for evaluation.

2. After your instructor's evaluation, consult with a NAEYC member and look at the NAEYC journal for clues which might make the article more attractive. Prepare the article for submission. Submit the article to NAEYC and a local newspaper for publiction.

3. The information you have already gathered will be extremely relevant for many parents in your community. Determine if your community (or one very close to where you have done your study/research) has any use for copies of this article in another language.

Your article will serve as the progress test for this unit.

UNIT 3

CONSUMER EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN

Objectives

Through a group analysis and project, the MATCHE student will be able to create a short advertisement which would apply consumer pressure to children to foment a specific consumer behavior.

Through the creation of an advertisement, the MATCHE student will be able to become articulate about the consumer pressures surrounding children.

Overview

In this unit, you will be analyzing advertisements aimed at children through the media. Advertising is a critical factor in the consumer pressures on children. This unit is designed to make you aware of some of the contemporary styles of advertising for children and more familiar with ways you can counter undue pressures on children. The lessons represent only one aspect of consumer education for children which you may encounter via television or other media.

Lesson 1: Collecting Data on Advertising Aimed at Children

Narrative Summary

It has been widely documented that children are greatly affected by the media, especially television. The values expressed through television are often passively accepted by children and assimilated easily in their value structure. It appears that children either passively accept these advertised values or else they need to actively reject them as they are sold to them through this medium which encourages passivity. Even the programs themselves sell values and are giant amplifiers of norms and values not consciously affirmed or determined by the majority of our society even though they may reflect the apparent, overt, values we share collectively as a culture.

In order to understand this aspect of consumer pressure on children, we are asking for your careful and detailed analysis of the consumer pressures on children as experienced on television programming and commercials.

Each member of your small group will analyze ten advertisements. It is the intention of this unit that you become aware of the method and appeal of contemporary advertisement aimed at children. Saturday morning

television shows are a constant source of advertisement. Tape record and then type the advertisement, adding any information you can that will describe the salient visual features as they occurred on the sound track. If you have a videotape recorder that can be attached to the television set, you may videotape the advertisement for educational purposes. The instructional media center on your campus may be able to assist you.

When you have the tapes (video or audio), identify the method or type of appeal used in the advertisement. Was it:

- social pressure
- created "needs"
- fear
- loneliness or boredom
- role identity
- values expressed
- need for passive amusement (example: battery-operated or fully automated toys)
- others (the list is open)

Which of the following categories was it designed for:

- age
- sex (If it was aimed at both, was there any sex role stereotyping assumed?)
- social class
- other categories (be as descriptive as possible)

Finally, prepare for each of the ten advertisements you evaluated a short write-up with a script, analysis, and any judgment on consumer pressures asserted by the ad.

Suggested Activities

1. Analyze ten commercials as directed above. Use the questions in the narrative summary as a guide. Record the ads on videotape or audiotape recorder; type the scripts with your comments about the visuals.

2. Develop a short paragraph on each commercial, including the style and effectiveness of the consumer pressure as developed. Clearly state what consumer behavior the ad intended to elicit.

(Other consumer-oriented activites may be prescribed by your instructor.)

Present all materials developed for this unit to instructor for evaluation. Proceed to Lesson 2.

Lesson 2: Creating an Advertisement

Narrative Summary

If you are able to construct a commercial which would effectively motivate a child to some stated consumer behavior, you are well on your way to discovering how deeply these advertisements affect children's behavior.

If you understand how deeply these commercials affect children and exactly how they work, you are more prepared to educate your students on ways to neutralize their negative effects.

Studying and preparing ad advertisement yourself is an excellent way to accomplish these tasks and to make you sensitive to the tasks that you will be attempting to elicit from your own students in the future.

It is recommended that you secure the aid of the radio and television department of your local institution. They will have professional equipment which will make your tasks easier. If you do not have such a department, however, you will make a tape recording as if it were to be used on the radio.

Suggested Activities

1. With the assistance of the radio and television department on your campus, or a local advertisement firm, create an advertisement aimed at children. It could be positive, for example, dealing with eating and health habits, or good buying habits. Be sure to state purpose/ objective, what audience, age, sex, what behavior is expected, what the frequency is of behavior expected--daily, monthly, only once--method of style of appeal to be used. Check with your instructor before you begin work on the actual advertisement.

2. Present your work to a group of children and note their response. Talk with them afterward and try to discover what was the most important item in the advertisement to them. For example, do you think they felt the pressure you were trying to elicit? Do you think that will elicit the desired consumer behavior?

3. Engage in a group evaluation of your work with your instructor. Your instructor will evaluate your work based on the objectives submitted before you began production of your advertisement.

POST-EVALUATION

Discuss with your instructor the following questions:

1. What are two key consumer issues facing living units with children which ou discovered in your work on this module? What are the key factors which could make them a positive experience for parents and children?

2. In what ways can advertising be a help to children and their consumer habits? In what ways do advertisements negatively influence children's consumer behavior?

3. What restrictions would you place on television advertising aimed at children (if any)? Why would you place these restrictions on advertising or why would you remove all restrictions?

Suggested Resources

Aaher, D.A. and G.S. Day. Consumerism: Search for the Consumer Interest. New York: Free Press, 1974.

Britton, Virginia. Personal Finance. New York: American Book Company, 1968.

Dorsey, Jean Muir, and Pauline Nickell. Management in Family Living. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1967. Chapter II.

Duvall, Evelyn Mills. Family Development. New York: J.B. Lippincott, 1971.

Feldman, Laurence P. Consumer Protection: Problems and Prospects. San Francisco: West Publishing Company, 1976.

Niss, James. F. Consumer Economics. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1974.

Pennock, Jean L. "Cost of Raising a Child." Family Economics Review. (March, 1970) 14-15.

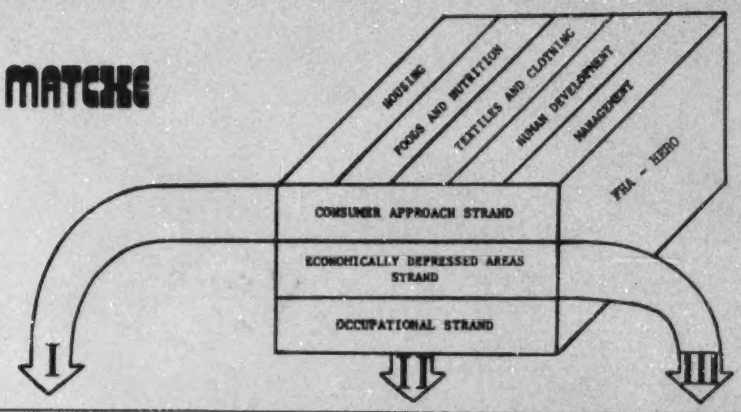
Bulletin

U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau. Working Mothers and the Need for Child Care Services. 1968.

MODULE PRE/POSTTEST

Since this is an activity-oriented learning unit designed to sensitize you to key issues, you will be learning by DOING. Critical consumer factors in reaising children are changing at an almost alarming pace, whereas those issues which remain constant are so obvious that formal pre/post-testing is not warranted. Process and discovery is emphasized in this module; that is, how does one formulate questions concerning the consumer aspects of raising children and where can one look to find the answers? Knowing these process factors is more relevant to teaching persons about the consumer issues of parenthood than simply teaching a "contemporary view of the consumer issues of parenthood." A consumer issue of parenthood which is contemporary today will only pass away as another issue emerges in the future.

MATCHE



	I	II	III
A.	CORE: CONSUMER APPROACH TO HOMEMAKING EDUCATION 1 Life Styles and the Consumer 2 Community Consumer Resources 3 Consumer Rights and Responsibilities 4 Incorporating the Consumer Approach in Homemaking Classes	CORE: ESTABLISHING OCCUPATIONAL PROGRAMS 1 Analyzing Job Market Opportunities 2 Developing Occupational Programs 3 Implementing Occupational Programs 4 Evaluating Occupational Programs	CORE: TEACHING HOME ECONOMICS IN ECONOMICALLY DEPRESSED AREAS 1 Characteristics of Economically Depressed Areas 2 Life Style Characteristics of Economically Depressed Areas 3 Community Resources for Economically Depressed Areas 4 Developing and Implementing Programs for Economically Depressed Areas
	AREA (Module) PACKAGES	AREA (Module) PACKAGES	AREA (Module) PACKAGES
B.	HOUSING 1 Consumer Use of the Community 2 Procedures for Selecting a Community 3 Procedures for Selecting Housing 4 Shopping for a Home Loan 5 Procedures for Selecting Furnishings 6 Maintenance Procedures for Surfaces, Furniture, and Appliances	HOUSING 1 Occupational Opportunities Related to Housing and Interiors 2 Required Skills for Retail Sales of Furnishings and Related Household Items	HOUSING 1 Low Income Housing 2 Government Housing Programs 3 Low Income Furnishings
C.	FOODS AND NUTRITION 1 Technological, Sociological, Ecological, and Environmental Factors Related to Food 2 Regulatory Agencies Responsible for Wholesomeness and Quality of Foods 3 Consumer Aspects in Planning Meals 4 Cultural Food Patterns 5 Influences on Food Prices	FOODS AND NUTRITION 1 Occupational Opportunities Related Foods and Nutrition 2 Operations and Activities of a Food Service Operation 3 Managing a Food Service Operation	FOODS AND NUTRITION 1 Food Availability in Economically Depressed Areas 2 Low Income Food Patterns 3 Meal Management on a Low Income
D.	TEXTILES AND CLOTHING 1 Consumer Approach to Textiles and Clothing 2 Sociological, Psychological, and Economic Factors Affecting Clothing Selection 3 Clothing Needs of Individuals 4 Applications and Implications of New Technology in Textiles and Clothing	TEXTILES AND CLOTHING 1 Occupational Opportunities Related Textiles and Clothing 2 Assembly Line Garment Construction 3 Merchandising Textiles and Ready-To-Wear	TEXTILES AND CLOTHING 1 Clothing the Individual and Family 2 Utilizing Resources for Clothing and Textiles
E.	HUMAN DEVELOPMENT 1 Societal Changes Affecting the Family 2 The Relationship Between Spending Patterns and Interpersonal Relationships 3 Financial Pressures in Various Life Styles and Cycles 4 Individuals and Families in Crisis 5 Consumper Aspects of Parenthood	HUMAN DEVELOPMENT 1 Occupational Opportunities Related to Human Development 2 Children's Center Aide 3 Developing Programs for Preschool Children 4 Convalescent Home Aide	HUMAN DEVELOPMENT 1 Characteristics of Economically Depressed Area Families 2 The Child and the Economically Depressed Area Family 3 Resources for the Economically Depressed Area Family
F.	MANAGEMENT 1 Relationship Between National and Consumer Economics 2 Consumer Legislative Issues 3 Environmental Issues and the Consumer 4 Financial Management 5 Family and Individual Credit Management 6 Management View of the Multiple Role 7 The Metric System	MANAGEMENT 1 Occupational Opportunities Related to Home Management and Supporting Services 2 Occupational Preparation for Jobs Utilizing Housekeeping Skills	MANAGEMENT 1 Management Skills 2 Money Management 3 Marketing Practices in Relation to Low Income Clientele